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Shock and Awe

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SHOCK AND AWE: CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS AT WAR AND PEACE - EXHIBITION REPORT

TITLE: *Shock and Awe: Contemporary Artists at War and Peace*

EXHIBITION DATES: 19 July – 28 September 2014

GALLERIES: Sharples, Winterstoke and Milner Galleries



Image credit above: On Psychological Operation in the Garden of Basra, Iraq, Xavier Pick, 2009-10, mixed media drawing, pen and ink, digital print on Hahnemühle German etching paper, Photoshop digital manipulation, acrylic paint and glazes

In the year which marks the centenary of the start of the First World War, Shock and Awe considers past, contemporary and continuing conflicts.

It highlights work by contemporary artists recently exposed to the front-line in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Balkans, as well as providing a platform for artists fascinated by acts of remembrance, or who use their art as a form of protest against war and conflict.

Alongside these powerful evocations of war and peace, a series of works have been inspired by the aftermath or the commemoration of war. These include new pieces influenced by traditional war memorials, as well as drawing on the emblematic power of civic statuary to explore how memory is shaped.

In contrast, other artists have responded to media representations of conflict or war-related activities distant from the arena of conflict to create politically charged sculpture, a moving film installation and anti-war and peace medals.

In addition to these poignant works, a number of historic First World War works are contextualised by responses from especially commissioned contemporary artists.

Curator Paul Gough comments: 'Artists have long been drawn with a dread fascination to the face of war. They have produced some of the most searing images, but have also created work that provokes comment, incites strong feelings, and promises reconciliation.'

Curated by Professor Paul Gough RWA as part of *Back From the Front: Art Memory and the Aftermath of War*. This programme is supported by Bristol 2014, University of the West of England, Arts Council England and the Bristol Cultural Development Partnership.

LIST OF EXHIBITING CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS

Vince Bevan, Stephen Bottomley, Michael Brennand-Wood, Kathleen Browne, Helen Carnac, Ian Chamberlain, David Cotterrell, George Coutouvidis, Susan Cross, Katie Davies, Tamar De Vries Winter, Bettina Dittlmann, Robert Ebendorf, Jill Gibbon, Paul Gough RWA, Kirsten Haydon, Stephen Hurst, Paul Laidler, Rolf Lindner, Denny Long RWA, Mario Minichiello, Xavier Pick, Michael Sandle RA, Tim Shaw RA, Emma Stibbon RA RWA, Elizabeth Turrell RWA, Jessica Turrell, Johnathan Ward and Lucy Willis RWA.

LIST OF EXHIBITING HISTORICAL ARTISTS

Muirhead Bone, Frank Brangwyn RA, Richard Hamilton, Ernest Procter ARA, William Rothenstein.

SPONSORSHIP

Back From the Front: Art Memory and the Aftermath of War. This programme is supported by Bristol 2014, University of the West of England, Arts Council England and the Bristol Cultural Development Partnership.

AUDIENCE FIGURES

	Paying No.*	Free No.**	Total
Total	4251	3795	8046

* Includes concessions, Art Fund Cards, Exhibition Tickets (repeat visits) and group rates.

**Includes under 16s, SGS, UWE and University of Bristol students, Academicians, Friends Members and comps and PV

Note that figures are for the entire Back From the Front programme.

EXHIBITION REVIEWS (selection)

Shock and Awe Review, Guide 2 Bristol, 23 July 2014

www.guide2bristol.com/news%5C84188/RWA-Bristol-art-gallery-review---Shock-and-Awe-Contemporary-Artists-at-War-and-Peace

Shock and Awe at the Academy - From The Desk Of Robert Lewis, 31 July 2014

<http://robertlewis.com/blog/shock-awe-academy/>

Shock and Awe Review, Gazette, 18 July 2014

http://www.gazetteseries.co.uk/whats_on/arts/11351289.UWE_artists_on_show_in_WWI_centenary_exhibition_programme_at_Royal_West_of_England_Academy/?ref=rss

Shock and Awe Review, University of Edinburgh, 25 July 2014

<http://www.eca.ed.ac.uk/school-of-design/news-events/shock-and-awe-contemporary-artists-at-war-peace>

Shock and Awe Feature, Al Jazeera, 22 August 2014

<http://www.aljazeera.com/video/europe/2014/08/provocative-war-art-exhibition-opens-uk-2014822131833140737.html>

Shock and Awe Feature, The Guardian, 27 July 2014

The woman turning arms fairs into art
Working undercover, artist Jill Gibbon sketches images of the surreal behind-the-scenes world of military fairs and expos to highlight how the arms trade treats missiles, tanks and bombs like any other commodity



A detail from one of Jill Gibbon's sketches for her project War Mart. 'In an arms fair, there is little sign of the destructive effects of the missiles, tanks and bombs,' she says. Illustration: Jill Gibbon

The revelations about British and French firms' [arms deals with Russia](#) have brought European military trading into the spotlight. At arms fairs such as [DSEI in London](#) and [Eurosatory in Paris](#), buyers eye up a range of tanks, helicopters, designer drones and branded bombs, while scantily clad women drape themselves over racks of missiles, reminiscent of the "booth babes" at tech conventions. For her project

To read full article see

<http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/shortcuts/2014/jul/27/art-fairs-into-art-jill-gibbon-arms-trade>

ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME (for Back From the Front programme):

Children & Family Programme

Back from the Front: Perceptive Block Printing Workshop, Jenny Blackwood

Saturday 16 August, 11am-3pm (drop-in session), suitable for 5-13yrs and their families / free with exhibition entry. Join us as we take inspiration from *Brothers in Art* and *Shock and Awe*, creating landscapes, still life arrangements and complementary block prints. Participants are invited to bring their own photographs of places, people or objects to help inspire their work. Amongst other artworks we will be taking a closer look at the sculptures of Stephen Hurst (such as *Trench Still Life*) - assemblages of discarded objects such as bullet shells, light bulbs and book covers, all cast into metal.

Mythical Masks: Children's Workshop with Eden 4

Saturday 6 September, 10.30am – 12pm, suitable for children aged 5-8yrs / free with exhibition entry, children to be accompanied by an adult. A mask-making workshop for young children, inspired by *Back From the Front*.



3D Landscapes: Children's Workshop with Eden 4

Saturday 6 September, 1.30 - 3.30pm / suitable for children aged 8-11 yrs / free with exhibition entry, children to be accompanied by an adult. Come and create your own 3D landscapes, inspired by the paintings of Paul and John Nash.

Adult Programme

Shock and Awe 'Walk and Talk'

Saturday 26 July, 11.30am / free with exhibition entry, spaces limited so please arrive early to avoid disappointment. Artist and curator of *Shock and Awe*, Paul Gough, will be leading an informal 'walk and talk' tour of this fascinating exhibition.

Brothers in Art 'Walk and Talk'

Saturday 2 August, 2pm / Free with exhibition entry, spaces limited so please arrive early to avoid disappointment. Exhibition curator Gemma Brace will lead an informal tour providing background context to the work.

Art and War: Truth, Propaganda and Protest Half-Day Workshop

Saturday 9 August, 2-5.30pm / £10 / £5 Friends, RWA, Artist Network Members and Students, price includes gallery admission. How can artists respond 'truthfully' to the spectacle and trauma of armed conflict? When does reportage become propaganda? Historically, how have artists attempted to take a pacifist stance, particularly in an environment of growing nationalism and military hostility? Addressing these questions and the wider themes of the exhibition, this half-day workshop will combine gallery-based talks with *Shock and Awe* artists Jill Gibbon and David Cotterrell, and an illustrated lecture with University of Bristol Art Historian, Dr Grace Brockington.

Shock and Awe: In discussion...Saturday 30 August, 2pm / Free with exhibition entry Join Hazel Brown, Project Research Assistant (UWE First World War Centenary projects) and exhibiting artists Elizabeth Turrell and Stephen Hurst, for an informal, gallery-based discussion focussing on both their own and others' artworks.

Landscape and the Things Behind: The Places and Paintings of the Brothers Nash with Dr. Justine Hopkins, Saturday 13 September, 10.30am – 4.30pm / £30

This study day offers an opportunity to explore the paintings of the brothers Nash – some immediately familiar, others almost unknown – considered not only in terms of technical mastery and the history of painting, but in the wider context of memory and imagination in a world torn by conflict. The day will include three lectures and a tour of the show.

HOW TO MAKE A SCARECROW SUMMER SCHOOL PROJECT WITH COTHAM SCHOOL BRISTOL,



This summer the RWA in collaboration with Cue Bristol Youth Theatre based at Cotham School, worked with a group of 8-12 year olds from primary and secondary schools across the city. The children had a busy week combining drama and visual arts activities, as well as visiting the RWA to see

the *Brothers in Art* and *Shock and Awe* shows.

Taking inspiration from the exhibitions the group developed short performance pieces relating to war – poignant scenes of remembrance and dramatic scenes of conflict. They wrote scripts poems, and learnt songs and mimes. They also created costumes, props and sets, including these wonderful 'scarecrow' figures, based on

characters suggested by artworks in the exhibitions.

THE ART WALL – MAKE A MEDAL

Interactive art station to accompany the exhibition.



ACTIVE ART

Welcome to the Art Trolley!

You will find a variety of puzzles, books, games, and art materials here, and also a small cuddly dog, called Clive, all of which you are free to use around the gallery. If you'd like to do some drawing, there is paper on the trolley, as well as pencils, sharpeners, rubbers, and also some clipboards to lean on.

Please leave the trolley where it is, on the landing, and remember to return anything you have used - apart from your artworks, which of course you are welcome to take home.

Have fun!

ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

EXHIBITION INSTALLATION IMAGES



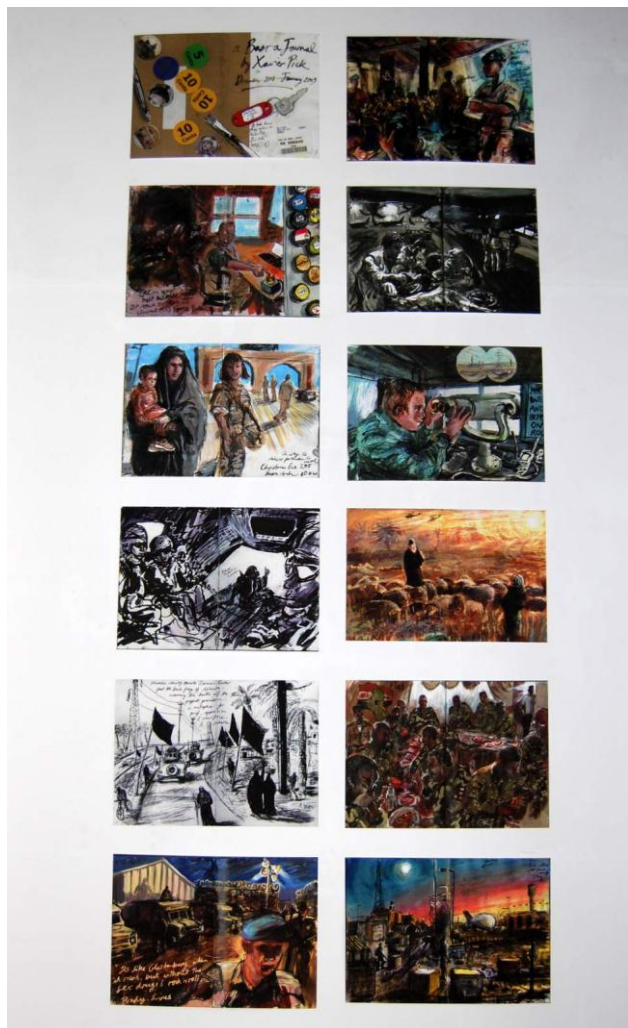
Blue Parade, White Light, Requiem, Michael Brennand-Wood



Blue Parade, White Light, Requiem, Michael Brennan-Wood



On Psychological Operation in the Garden of Basra, Iraq, Xavier Pick



Facsimile pages from IRAQ Sketchbook December 2008 – today, Xavier Pick



Untitled, Paul Laidler



Supernumerary and Gateway III, David Cotterrell



The Sleep of Reason, Mario Minichiello



Casting a Dark Democracy, Tim Shaw RA



Casting a Dark Democracy, Tim Shaw RA



Seafort I and Seafort II, Ian Chamberlain and Views of the Western Front and Church Ruins, Muirhead Bone



The July Series, Lucy Willis RWA



Ambulances at Rouen, Ernest Proctor and Remembrances, Denny Long RWA



Mostar, Bosnia. Civilian attempting to sell ties to Spanish UN soldiers, Mostar, Bosnia. Sniper from the HVO militia and Mostar, Bosnia. Family photograph in a deserted flat on the frontline, Vince Bevan



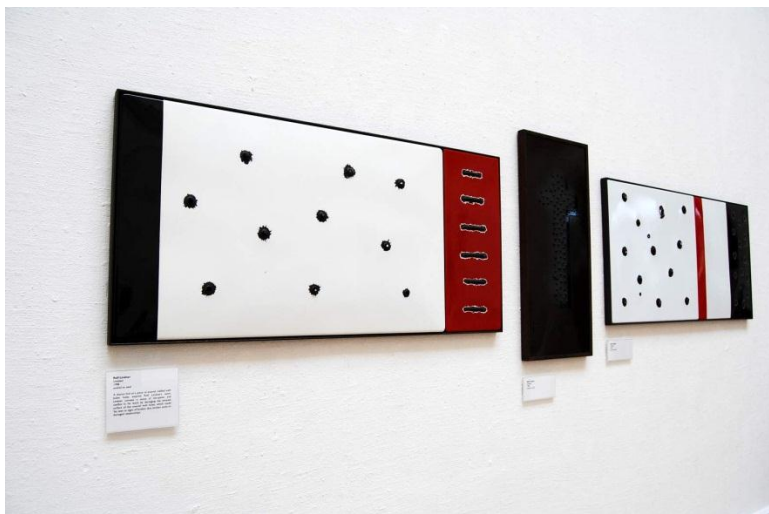
Woven Stories, Kirsten Haydon



'Cuando Parti Una Mañana De Verano' (As I Walked Out One Midsummer Morning), Susan Cross



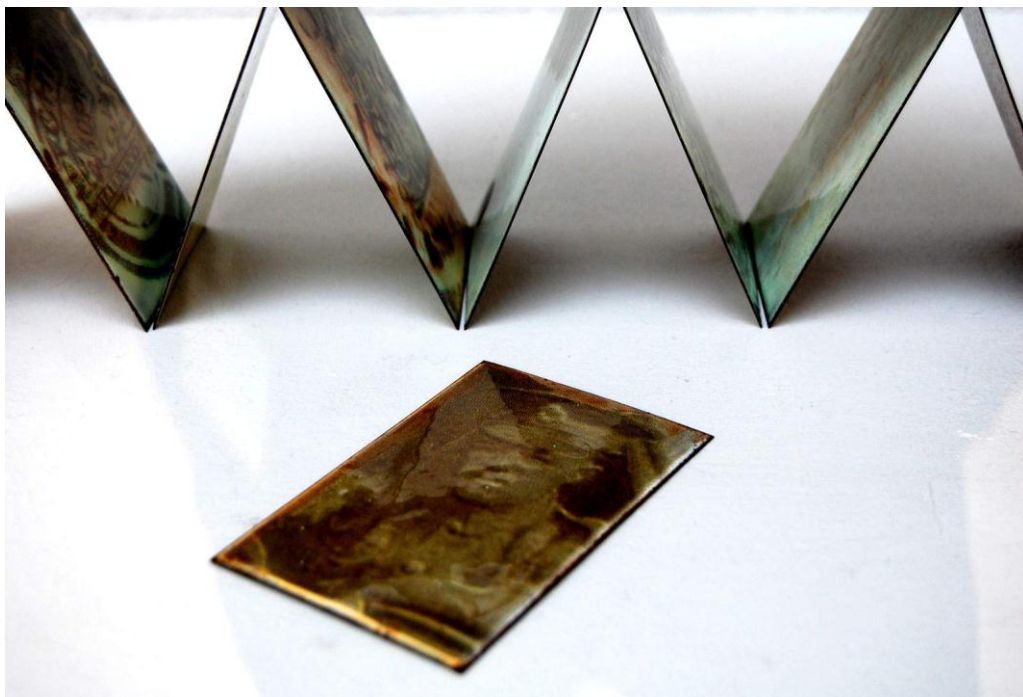
Observe, Helen Carnac



Untitled, Rolf Lindner



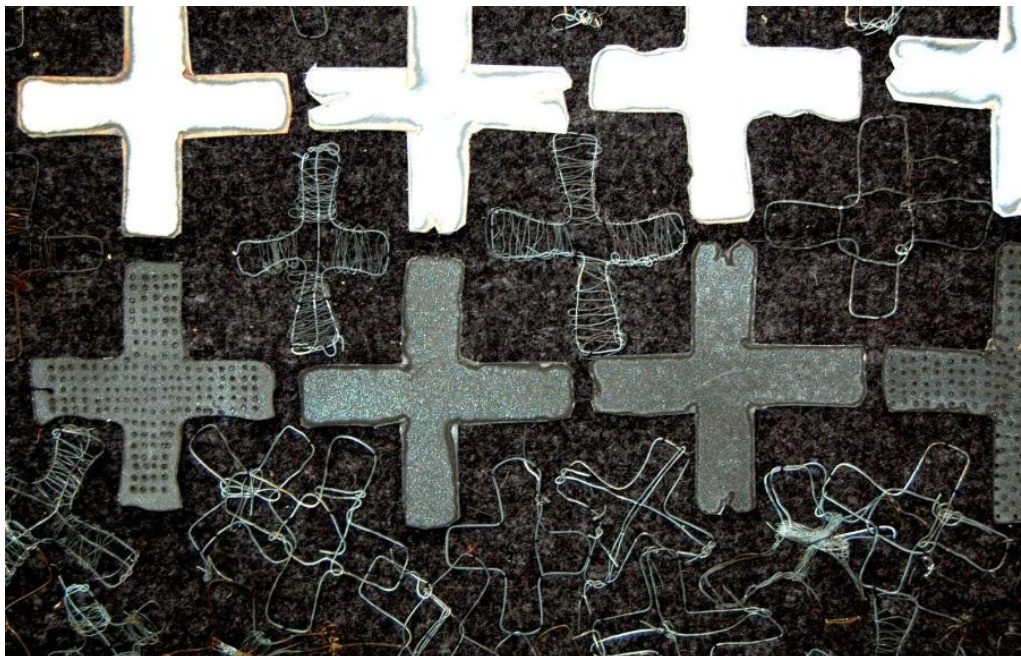
Markers: Universal Declaration of Human Rights Series, Elizabeth Turrell RWA



House of Cards, Stephen Bottomley



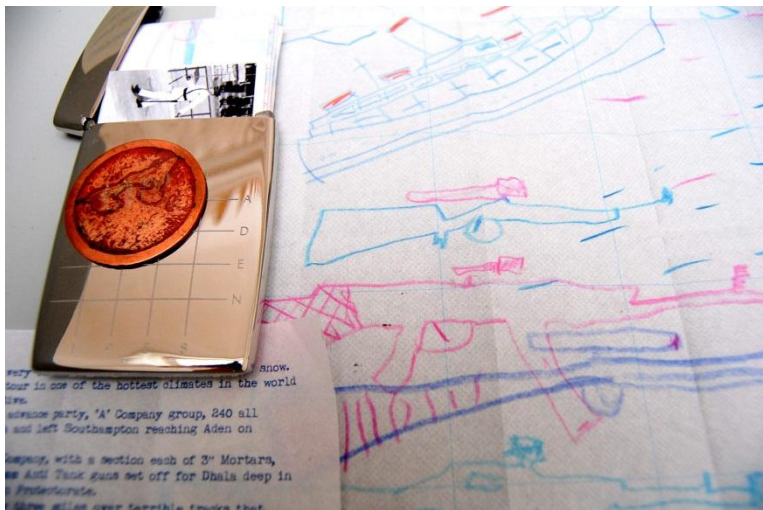
Interrogation Expert: Guantanamo and Interrogation Expert: Abu Ghraib, Kathleen Browne



The Missing, Markers, Elizabeth Turrell RWA



Memory Bowl, Tamar De Vries Winter



Clear, Jonathan Ward



Fragments, Jessica Turrell



Fragments, Jessica Turrell



Found and Given, George Coutouvidis



Remembrance, Robert Ebendorf



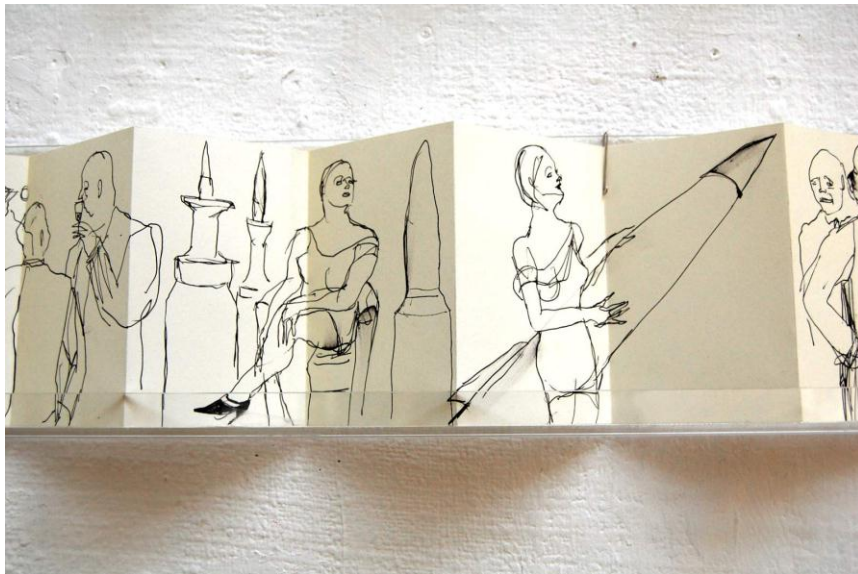
Memento Mori and Memento Mori III, Bettina Dittlmann



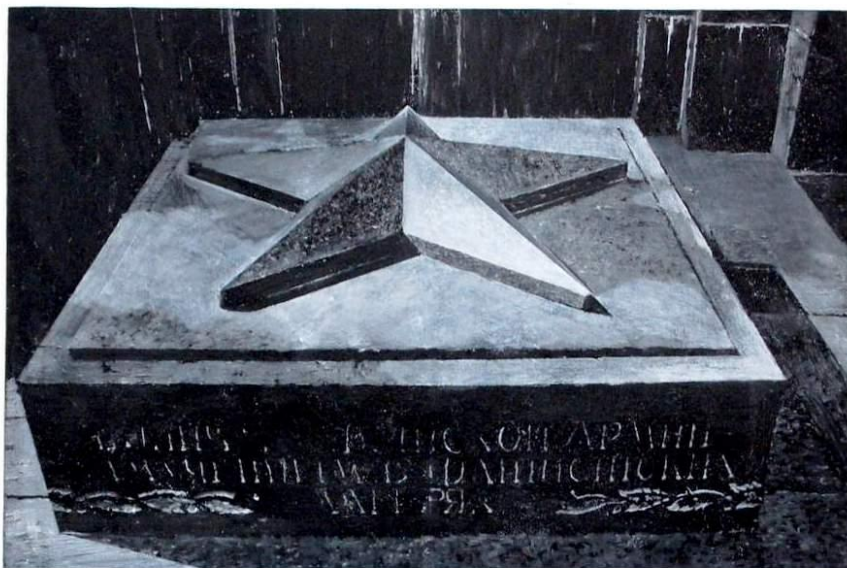
Trench Still Life, Gifts and Signal, Stephen Hurst



Poster Installation and Sketchbook Installation, Jill Gibbon

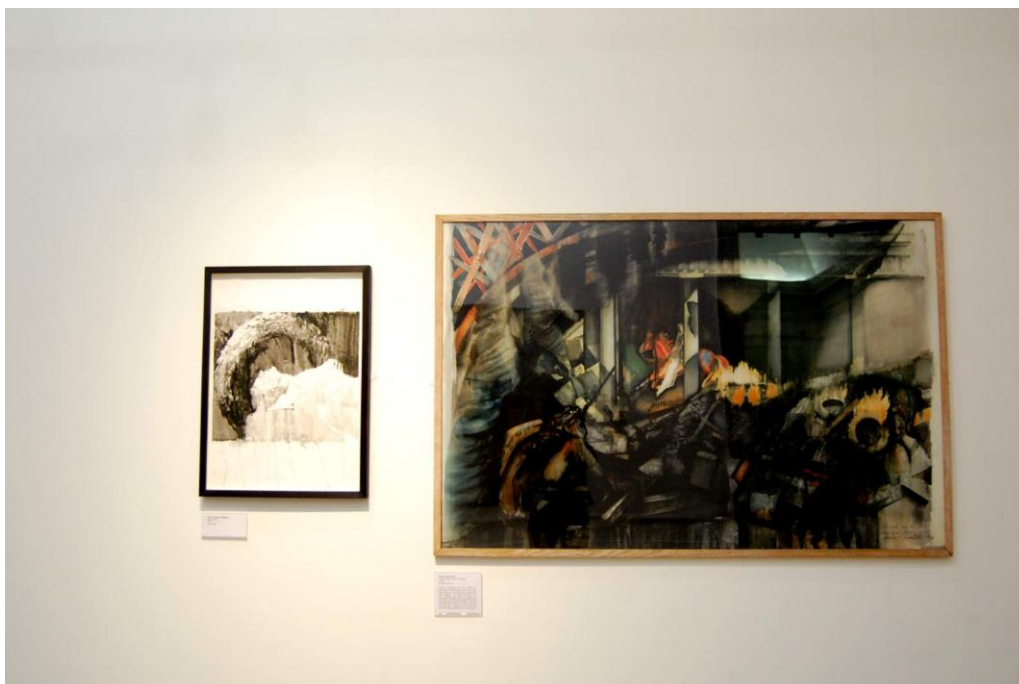


Sketchbook Installation and Sweetners – Gifts From Arms Fairs, Jill Gibbon



Emma Stibbon RWA RA
Red Star
2010
chalk on blackboard

Red Star, Emma Stibbon



Without End, Emma Stibbon and Ich Sah ein Ross das war Feurig Rot, Michael Sandle RA



The Separation Line, Katie Davies





PRIVATE VIEW IMAGES

Please see the RWA Flickr site here

www.flickr.com/photos/rwapress/sets/72157645577222348/

FOOTAGE FROM THE INSTLLATION OF CASTING A DARK DEMOCRACY

http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCz_hLu_qRtWXWA_iOVFDC4g

COMMENTS BOOK (SELECTION)

After an amazing ...! Margaret Bondfield
RtP (Australia)

Excellent exhibition - very thought provoking.
Do women start wars? What can we do
to stop them from starting? Bishollady.
Yes they do, THATCHER

Very powerful exhibition - very moving. Good variety of
media, times etc. Does nothing change?

An incredibly moving + powerful contemporary
exhibition. Katie Davies film was the last
piece I viewed + left me in tears. Well done
all.

Judy Harrington
Exeter, Devon

Very moving by the film of reproduction - no words no
music, just the essence of the image, Angelika Williams
Barton

A most moving & poignant exhibition - Denny Long ^{RWA}.

When will we ever learn? J. Grinble.

An excellent exhibition / show. Unfortunately ^{some of} the signage is far too low, presumably for wheel chair users. I suggest double signs if it has to be so low. Most people struggled to read the descriptions. - Unnecessary.

A powerful condemnation of war.

Express your outrage now for the suffering children of Gaza. International laws being breached daily by the Israelis, intent on genocide.

Excellent exhibition. Very troubling & thought provoking.

Well done RWA - superbly presented too - you have a formidable hanging team - great curators too!

26/7/14

Listened to Paul Gough's interesting lecture
but, in the heat, too, was not really interested to
hear abt. the curator's relationship with the artist/s
- more keen to learn abt. actual works. More emphasis
on Paul & John Nash's work, too, wd. have been useful.
L Dryfe

30/7/14

I like the sweets and the foam bomb-
the sweets looked nice! Jill Gibbon is
very good. By Hazel! :)

30/07/14

I think the metal sculptures you see when you walk in are
very interesting especially the way the different parts work
together. Heather

Not enough anger —
War isn't
all about
anger.

that's where you're wrong
Anger causes WAR !!
Pity + humanity come first.
Q. Saeed

Impressive - but should be seen by more people. Free entry to school parties at particular times? Publicise to schools.

A very powerful exhibition (I agree with above too) It shows what modern artists can do when they actually experience as opposed to striking attitudes which are artificial. Maureen Armstrong
Tina Wren

Stunning in its boldness, density and intimacy. E. Toynbee

Beautifully executed - show's sculpture inspiring and all magnets poking. ET

The photographs from Afghanistan/Iraq of the medics & soldiers are stunning. As for the rest of the exhibit, I'm afraid that I find the narrative all too predictable, there is no depth of investigation going on here except the obvious - I suggest that the artist who made the big sculpture of the detainee might find a deeper subject through examining the guards etc.

There is so much more in war than bullets, torture, blood, the dispossessed - all of which belongs here for sure, but as artists it is our job to let our readers, our viewers make up their own minds. & not use art for polemic. SM Steele Official War Artist AFGANISTAN 2008-10

10.8.14.

Very good exhibition.

Brilliant!

Fine exhibition, best when the artists are not overly polemical.
David Cotterrell's work is a standout. Pity we couldn't
see the Nash's first world war paintings of the 1917! CS

A remarkable exhibition. Now who will be artists for the
current genocide in N. Iraq? JH.

Thank you RWA - A wonderful show - very
thought provoking - Judy Welford
Overwhelming. Well done RWA. Nash the best of it Nick ~~Stirling~~ my

Totally arresting N. Kay 14.9.14

Totally amazing exhibition. Can't find
the words to say how moving,
what talent to express it all.

Patrick F. ROACH - BRISTOL
BS5

16/08/14

It's so important that these images
(the photos, sculptures, film, paintings, artefacts)
are shown together. Very powerful! An excellent,
thought-provoking exhibition. Thank you.

Amazing !!!

loved the casting a dark democracy !!!

Ron & Julia Cairn / Taunton, Som.

I do find some images disturbing,
and wonder what make a man lose
all humanity ...

I loved it. Brought 3 of my friends from London
to see it. Please continue to expand & hope
you bring it to London soon! —A.

Amazing. The pity of war embodied.
PE

The Sculpture by Tim Shaw is
a real eye-opener. R. Humphreys Taunton.
25/8/14

Tim Shaw spot on - Large drawing
proves Big isn't always Best RHR
25/8/14

Katie Davies' installation is the most moving
I have ever experienced.

R. Humphreys
27/8/14
Said, but Wonderful
Photo M

Tim Shaw Sculpture brilliant but
over I find this quite depressing because
of WAR Jan Stone 25/8/2014

Excellent - and good to see contemporary women artists' work.

Oh human inhumanity to one another.
War is devastating waste. So awful.

M. Evans.

Powerful, moving work. Thank you Anne Dillon

We came to see the Nash pictures but instead were
blown away by "Shock and awe", especially the film
by Katie Davies - so powerful.

30/8 JH + Aline from Sandham Memorial Chapel, Buryclere

An exhibition that is moving, horrifying + yet beautiful.

30th August. Such impressively varied responses to war. I've come a second time to prepare myself for 3 months in occupied Palestine.

30 Aug. Poignant + moving - Lucy Willis photo made me weep. However, as a veteran of Palestine - many visits over the years - nothing will prepare you for it. The war there since '67 is a subtle but constant dehumanising of the Palestinian people - as was against people interred!

4 September 2014

When will we ever learn?

This exhibition should really be seen by everyone.

The suffering, on every "side", in every war, is incalculable.

We know what happens - hearts are broken, and hardened.

Then we do it all over again....

There should be no profit in selling weapons, from any civilized country.

The "facts" from munitions factories defy belief!

But the terrible image of a man, by Tim Shaw, already helpless and now being tormented, is humbling and utterly horrific.

06/06

5th September 2014

Difficult to take in such horrors - in some cases very forcefully interpreted and brought to life (if that is the right turn of phrase to use about war)!

Brilliant exhibitions: Shode & Awe & the Nash exhibitions. In different ways outstanding. Hard to imagine the two Nash's both so brilliant, esp. at watercolour. Shode & Awe also stunning work. Liked the repatriation video, the drawings of Basra and the medical suite photographs at Camp Bastion, Afghanistan. Es. Olders

No war but the class war!

Extend the 11.00 2 hrs silence permanently to the galleries and don't make noisy kids workshops in them! Also no war but class war (quietly)!

6th September

'Shock and Awe' - describes the exhibition succinctly.
Wonderful, awful and painful. Brought me to tears.
The waste of it all. The Tim Shaw piece sums it all
up for me.
Pity w/ War brothers war paintings! Jenna + Mike R.

12/09/14.

A fantastic emotional and — well all the emotions.
Debate.

12/9/14

Thankyou RWA for this - am so glad I was able
to see both these exhibitions - so much to
think on - . . . ~~Metron~~

12/9/14.

The TIM SHAW is startling & has a great effect - and I stand
in AWE at it.

Jill Gibbons Sketches - I love the simplicity & the response she has done
Jenny

WITH THANKS

The RWA would like to thank all the artists and private lenders involved for taking part in the exhibition; Professor Paul Gough RWA for curating the exhibition and Dr Hazel Brown, Project Research Assistant, First World War Centenary projects, University of the West of England for supporting the project and producing the insightful interpretation texts.

We would also like to thank the following organisations who have supported the project: Bristol 2014, Arts Council England, the Bristol Cultural Development Partnership and the University of the West of England, Bristol.

BCDP culture | ideas | arts and sciences



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LOTTERY FUNDED

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